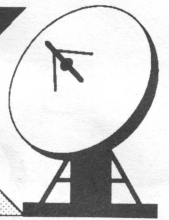


MATWATCH

16 Robin Hood Lane Jackson TN 38305

Hotline - 901-664-9246



VOL. 5, NO. 4

FINAL EDITION

JAN. 27-FEB. 2

Thanks For The Memories

If I were Bob Hope, I'd signal for Les Brown and His Band of Renown to start and I'd create melodic lyrics to symbolize my feelings toward you special folks.

But you can't translate music through a newsletter, so I'll simply share a few lines to express my sincere appreciation for the many friendships, through the mail, in person and unspoken which have been made these past four years. You have shared peaks and valleys with us and given us the persistence to hang in there during some very tough times.

I made a careful decision last summer to put this publication to bed in January after an exhausting illness which still tests my strength every day. The grind of putting this publication out on a weekly basis can only be understood by those who do it. To have as stressful a permanent job as do I in a management role in a television, the strain of maintaining the standards of MATWATCH are just too great. And as elder member of the newsletter fraternity, the time has come for a rest.

We have been critical at times but only because we care greatly for this magnetic pastime. And we care for the integrity and interests of the audience.

We will express some deeper emotions in our annual, *MATWATCH: THE FINAL CHAPTER*, which I hope you'll order. Perhaps we'll return in a few years for *THE MATWATCH FAMILY REUNION* or maybe at a future Christmas for *A VERY BRADY MATWATCH*. Or the always-dreaded *RETURN TO MATWATCH*.

Nonetheless, stay happy and well, be kind to each other, don't forget us, thanks for four wonderful years and--most of all--may God richly bless you.

Steve Beverly

At Superbrawl

ROSS-VENTURA: DON'T SPLIT 'EM

If we're going into retirement, why not return to the roots of MATWATCH: the broadcast of wrestling itself. Last Tuesday night, you were treated to the closest you'll get to a dream team at the mike. And I hope some reported temptations to split this pairing for *SUPERBRAWL II* will be quickly aborted.

Just as in many Super Bowls, many on-paper ideal announce pairings do not work well together. Before John Madden was paired with Pat Summerall, he did CBS football for a year with the great Vin Scully. But the combination of the poetic-waxing Scully and the frenetic Madden was too much of a contrast. Chemistry is everything in calling an event and even award-winning credentials melt if the play-by-play caller and analyst don't mesh in styles.



That was anything but the case during the finale of TBS' *CLASH OF THE CHAMPIONS* last Tuesday. I had privately wondered how well Jim Ross and Jesse Ventura would blend as a broadcast combo. Both have been the perpetual winners as best in their fields among various newsletter polls over the last four years (except for

1991 when Ventura was idle until his *GRUDGE MATCH* color work began last fall). But would Ross's almost impeccable timing be thrown off by the strong Ventura personality? Would Jesse adapt to the less cartoonish, more action-oriented WCW? It took only about 90 seconds to see.

If anything, the Ross-Ventura pairing brought out the respective strengths in each. Ross plays to the level of intensity of his partner and one reason I've always felt his work with Michael Hayes was among the best he's ever done is because Ross and Hayes have a rhythm, a tempo, a one-liner pace which is almost like watching a choir in tune. Ventura has the volume, the inflection and--most of all--the personality to match Ross, stride for stride.

At times, when two strong personalities match wits at the mike, a collision course starts. Not here. Not to borrow from the name of an old country band but Jim and Jesse's call of the Sting/Steamboat vs. Rude/Austin match was like a finely-made watch. Instead of brusquely challenging Jesse's heel views with an antagonistic retort, Ross would return a "why would you say that?" which allowed Jesse to have the open line. In contrast, Ventura has not lost the punch--aggressively pointing out the illegal double pile pin of Sting and Steamboat on Austin to win the match.

In the last week, talk has surfaced that this may not be the team calling the action during *SUPERBRAWL II*. Discussion has centered around two possible plans: 1) a Tony Schiavone-Ventura team because the two of them have worked WWF pay-per-view shows previously together. Ross would

(Continued on Page 3)

CLASH: Entertaining Show, Ties for Worst-Ever Rating

It offered a little something for everyone. A brawl into a cattle barn. Wins by babyfaces in most of the key matches. A confusing personality switch for Brian Pillman, which apparently changed the next night. And the arrival of Jesse (The Body) Ventura, an acquisition no wrestling viewer can doubt is major. It all added up to a tie for the lowest-ever rated **CLASH OF THE CHAMPIONS** special in TBS history.

CLASH BY QUARTERS

8:05 3.2/4.7	9:15 3.7/5.5
8:15 3.7/5.5	9:30 3.5/5.2
8:30 3.6/5.4	9:45 3.7/5.5
8:45 3.5/5.5	10:00 4.3/6.4
9:00 3.7/5.5	10:15 4.2/6.2

Total Rating/Share: 3.7/5.5
2.22 Million Homes

CLASH scored a 3.7 rating and 5.5 per cent share of audience for its two-and-a-half hour slot on TBS last Tuesday. The show was down 14% from its resurgent 4.3 for the November special in Savannah GA and off 5% from last February's **DIXIE DYNAMITE** in Gainesville GA.

Plus, the six-man tag match featuring Barry Windham/Ron Simmons/Dustin Rhodes vs. Arn Anderson/Bobby Eaton/Larry Zbyszko slightly outpulled the Sting/Ricky Steamboat vs. Rick Rude/Steve Austin finale. The six-man scored a 4.3/6.4 (2.46 million homes), nosing out the 4.2/6.2 (2.45 million) for the main event. The peak rating dipped 10% from last February's Ric Flair-Scott Steiner topline.

The show opened slightly better than last year's winter **CLASH** as the Steiner Brothers-Curtis Hughes/Big Van Vader lidlifter averaged a 3.5/5.1, compared to the 3.2/4.8 for Sting/Luger vs. Doom in '91. But the special never gained any ratings momentum, never fluctuating from 8:15 to 10 between a 3.5 and 3.7. The Cactus Jack-Van Hammer match and Ventura intro perked the numbers to a 3.7, then another dip came during the Freebirds and Vinnie (Oz) Vegas matches.

The 2.12 million homes was almost level with September's **FALL BRAWL** (2.1 million) but down slightly from last February (2.16 million). The evening left the five **CLASH** events since Dusty Rhodes' booking tenure began in January 1991 with a 3.9/6.0 average (2.21 million homes), including four of the five lowest-rated in the series of 18 specials.

Ironically, this came amidst what was largely an entertaining program. The Steiners always make for a strong opener---much in the same fashion as when the Road Warriors or Midnight Express were previously used in that capacity to get the live crowd cranked. The show only had two genuinely weak matches and the Cactus Jack-Van Hammer brawl was a spectacle which even made Hammer appear to be a more experienced and polished pro. The Brian Pillman/Mark Bagwell vs. Terry Taylor/Tracy Smothers contest elevated Bagwell's stature with plenty of hot action. Jim Ross and Tony Schiavone offered their usual workmanlike mike effort and the addition of Jesse Ventura to team with Ross in the finale was a classic call (see **BEVERLY COLUMN**, page 1).

If one had to analyze the problems this show had in drawing ratings, they were severalfold: 1) the CBS movie **BORN ON THE FOURTH OF JULY**, which has had no prior cable exposure, was spread over the entire 8-11 p.m. prime time period and went through the roof (likely finishing in the top seven for the week). The film, with broad young adult, male and female appeal, likely took away many male fans teetering on a choice. Coupled with ABC's strong female and kid-appeal comedy lineup from 8-10 p.m., the competition was much more massive than anticipated; 2) a mistake was made in not promoting Ventura's appearance in advance. The only real mystery built around the addition of a major name was predominantly developed on Ross's 900 number segment and his Sunday night WSB-AM radio show, both of which have limited audiences. As one TBS staffer strongly familiar with the wrestling division told MATWATCH late last week, "They (WCW) should have told us about Jesse as soon as they had him signed and even if we didn't start the promos until the weekend before the **CLASH**, it's a built-in way to hook an audience. We could have blitzed it about Jesse;" 3) this card was far more weakly-promoted during the weekly TBS shows than the November event. While you saw brief rundowns of four of the key matches, specifics to build the intensity of the matchups were missing. And one has to ask this: in November, the anticipation that one or more titles may change had been heavily orchestrated---was the value of changing the tag

THE BOTTOM FIVE

DIXIE DYNAMITE (Feb. 1991), 3.9/5.8 (2.16 million).
KNOCKSVILLE, U.S.A. (June 1991), 3.9/6.7 (2.22 million).
GUTS & GLORY (June 1989), 3.8/6.6 (1.9 million).
FALL BRAWL (Sept. 1991), 3.7/5.9 (2.1 million).
TOPEKA CLASH (Jan. 1992), 3.7/5.5 (2.12 million).

PEAK WINTER CLASH RATINGS

Ric Flair/Arn Anderson/Ole Anderson vs. Great Muta/Buzz Sawyer/Dragonmaster (1990), 5.9/9.0 (3.15 million homes).

Flair-Ricky Steamboat angle (1989), 5.1/7.8 (2.31 million).

Flair vs. Scott Steiner (1991), 4.8/7.4 (2.69 million).

Barry Windham/Ron Simmons/Dustin Rhodes vs. Arn Anderson/Larry Zbyszko/Bobby Eaton (1992), 4.3/6.4 (2.46 million).

(Continued on Page 3)

Topeka CLASH

(Continued from Page 2)

Steve Beverly (Continued from Page 1)

assume the Brent Musberger role Schiavone previously has as program host; 2) three men in a booth with either Ross and Schiavone trading play-by-play roles on various matches or the two going all the way with Ventura.

Let me state, for the record, I have nothing against Schiavone calling the action. He has matured tremendously from the minor league baseball announcer with shoulder-length hair who was doing the town plugs for Jim Crockett Promotions in 1983. His year in the World Wrestling Federation demonstrated broad growth, particularly the work he did on two pay-per-views with Ventura as he far outclassed Gorilla Monsoon. The man is a quality announcer and has my respect.

I have no objections to a three-man booth. Frankly, ABC has proved for 21 of the last 22 NFL seasons, it can be uniquely entertaining with the right combination. And if that is the compromise which is reached, then so be it. Ross and Schiavone work well as a combo and would only be anointed with Ventura along.

But if you want me to go out on a controversial note, I will. It is my considered opinion that to remove Jim Ross from the anchor play-by-play role on the first (and, of the moment *only*) spectacular in which Ventura is contracted to appear for WCW is to deny viewers the best combination in the industry---and certainly the finest Turner Home Entertainment has ever had to offer. If Ventura is signed to future shows and I have no doubt he will be, there will be plenty of time for Schiavone to have a solo shot with Jesse.

To do otherwise is to play a game of petty, old-line behind-the-scenes wrestling politics which has no place in 1992 or in the Turner organization. A lot of internal jockeying for position in the wake of Jim Herd's departure, which should come as no surprise, is going on within WCW. Such battles always happen when personnel attempt to align themselves for favor with the new boss.

Ross may have had his ups and downs over the past year, primarily from the sheer numbers of shows he has had to do. He has both friends and foes within WCW. But cast him against anyone in the business when you have a big show and you're changing your major title, as will happen Feb. 29, and Ross is the man you want calling your lead play-by-play, particularly with the man who may be the best color announcer in the history of the business.

This is not a case of the cliché "if it ain't broke, don't fix it." It's a case of giving the viewers the best a company has to offer.

team titles in Jacksonville, FL, the week before worth proving it can be done in a standard house show (before 2,500 fans) or would it have been worth a few tenths of insurance ratings points by saving that until the special? What was more important?; 4) finally, again the wrestling viewer has increasingly demonstrated burnout when subjected to spectacles as close together as were the WWF's *ROYAL RUMBLE* and the *CLASH*. I'm sure TBS took this special out of the February sweeps for the first time to avoid head-on competition with the Winter Olympics but the view from here is it would have been more advantageous to go one week later to give nine days' separation from the hoopla over the *RUMBLE*.

Again, some past *CLASH* specials can be faulted for too many matches little different from what one sees on the average weekly WCW series; however, only the Vegas-Rich bout could be classified in that category this time. Other than a couple of annoying shortcircuits in the mikes, production was sharp until the ill-fated "I'm a Freebird" number, which---in an embarrassing attempt to match a pre-taped video with a live performance---Michael and Jimmy had no chance to lip-sync in the arena because they couldn't hear the audio in their headsets. It was enough to make one want to hear again the vocals to "Theme from World Championship Wrestling."

On the positive side, it was smart taking a break to allow the cameras an opportunity to smoothly follow the Cactus-Hammer brawl to the bull barn. Plus, the documentary-style profile of the Steiner Brothers was one of the best things ever done on WCW---the kind of thing I pleaded for three years ago when the company was leaning toward a sports-oriented presentation. It was straightforward, yet showed all of the top opponents the Steiners have defeated in the last three years, including a less-than-subtle depiction of their wins over the last two WWF tag team champions.

This special simply suffered from weak pre-show buildup and more massive competition on the mainline networks than *CLASH* usually experiences in its old Wednesday slots.

WINTER CLASH RATING/SHARE

Rating/Share

St. Valentine's Day	
Massacre (1989)	4.6/7.0
Texas Shootout (1990)	4.5/6.8
Dixie Dynamite (1991)	3.9/5.8
Topeka Clash (1992)	3.7/5.5

MATWATCH 25 SCALE

Crowd Enthusiasm	4.2
Announcing	4.8
Quality of Matches	2.8
Total Production	3.3
Overall Excellence of Show	3.8

Total Rating: 18.9

FLASHBACK SUBSCRIPTIONS

A number of subscribers to *FLASHBACK*, our monthly nostalgic television newsletter, have asked where has it been? On hiatus since July when we were taken ill but the bulletin returns to publication Feb. 15 with a fond look at three people who passed on in late 1991 and left a television legacy: Tennessee Ernie Ford, Fred MacMurray and Redd Foxx.

Anyone who is a fan of *NICK AT NITE* and television series of the '50s, '60s and '70s will enjoy *FLASHBACK*. And I'd love to have you as a subscriber so we can keep in touch.

The cost is \$1.50 per issue or \$16 per year. Those who still have issues due will have your subscription expiration dates delayed to meet your payment. Send check, cash or money order to: *FLASHBACK*, 16 ROBIN HOOD LANE, JACKSON TN 38305.

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WWF Fox Card Set For Feb. 8

LUBBOCK TX----The final severance between Hulk Hogan and Sid Justice was taped here Monday night for airing next Saturday on Fox's *SATURDAY NIGHT'S MAIN EVENT*.

The special, shifting from NBC, is headlined by Hogan/Justice tag vs. WWF champion Ric Flair and the Undertaker. Justice turns on Hogan after the bout.

In other matches for the Fox show, Roddy Piper defends the Intercontinental belt in a rematch vs. The Mountie, Randy Savage meets Jake Roberts and the Legion of Doom defends the WWF tag title against the Beverly Brothers. *SNME* airs at 9 p.m. on Fox next Saturday.

RUMBLE Scores 2.0 Preliminary

NEW YORK----A spot-check of top cable operators indicates the WWF *ROYAL RUMBLE* drew approximately a 2.0 per cent buy-rate out of a universe of 17.8 million pay-cable homes.

The show, in which Ric Flair won the WWF title, was ordered in an estimated 356,000 homes. At an average \$25 per buy, the show grossed in the vicinity of \$8.9 million.

Final buy figures will not be available for approximately six weeks.

New Mr. & Mrs. Hot Stuff United

ATLANTA----Barring a last-minute change, Thomas Edward Gilbert II and Debra Ann (Madusa) Miceli were scheduled to be married either Tuesday or Wednesday.

Gilbert told MATWATCH of the couple's plans Sunday night.

The Global booker and the co-manager of WCW's Dangerous Alliance (and former AWA women's champion) planned to exchange vows on one of Miceli's two days off this week.

The couple was together last week in New Orleans at the NATPE TV programmers' convention, Gilbert in the Andrews Entertainment booth and Miceli for TBS.

A Mild Surprise

Savage Said Slated For WWF Title Shot

Unless plans were changed at the eleventh hour (and some sources were indicating they still could be), television stations carrying World Wrestling Federation shows were scheduled to be delivered tapes this Wednesday indicating Randy Savage as the number one contender for Ric Flair's WWF championship.

The decision apparently sets up *WRESTLEMANIA VIII* for a double main event in Indianapolis with Flair defending the WWF title against Savage and a Hulk Hogan-Sid Justice grudge battle as the co-topliner. The Hogan-Justice confrontation was set up Monday night in Lubbock TX in a match taped for next weekend's *SATURDAY NIGHT'S MAIN EVENT* on Fox (see *THIS WEEK'S HEADLINES*).

WWF spokesman Steve Planamenta would make no comment on the Indiana card last week. When asked about the likelihood of a Hogan-Flair title match, Planamenta said: "Everybody's come to that conclusion but the card has not been decided on, as yet."

If the plans for *WM8* are as MATWATCH and a number of other publications have been led to believe, we're told it has happened, in part, because of the recent negative publicity on steroid use in the WWF and challenges to Hogan's credibility in the New York media, including by journalist Phil Mushnick, as a result of charges by former WWF champion Superstar Billy Graham that Hogan lied on the *ARSENIO HALL SHOW* last summer about the Hulkster's past steroid connections.

Scheduled to be interviewed for *20/20* this week, Graham indicated to MATWATCH he will link the WWF to extensive cocaine use in the industry and now openly accuses unspecified WWF employees of promising unnamed wrestlers higher positions on cards in exchange for homosexual favors.

When asked about the latter last week, Planamenta said: "I'm not aware of that and it would totally surprise me. But nothing Billy Graham says surprises me at all. I would find that very difficult to believe. Strange things are happening with him (Graham)."

Asked if WWF owner Vince McMahon has decided how or if he'll respond to Graham's charges, Planamenta told MATWATCH: "He hasn't indicated to me that he's decided to go one way or the other."

Several other newspapers are hot on the steroid story. A four-part series in the Charleston (S.C.) daily last week quoted Graham, former wrestler David Shults and Planamenta extensively on the recent charges. *THE SAN DIEGO UNION* is also planning an investigative story on wrestling and steroids and MATWATCH has been told at least three other journalists for mainline papers are soon to develop stories which will not be flattering to Hogan or the WWF.

Hogan is scheduled for an extensive hiatus between *WM8* and the August *SUMMER SLAM*. A foregone conclusion had been for Hogan to regain the belt from Flair in an ultimate pay-per-view showdown April 5. But the Hogan layoff and the heated publicity has apparently postponed that plan for at least the summer. If Flair were to retain the WWF belt against Savage, it would set up the longest run a heel champion has had in the McMahon Jr. era.

One source has told MATWATCH TitanSports has to be concerned about a possible long-term impact on television advertisers more than on arena attendance. "If the publicity about Hogan becomes widespread enough, it could create doubt on a number of companies which have aligned themselves with the WWF and Hogan," said one programming analyst who attended last week's NATPE programming convention in New Orleans. "As of now, there really isn't a scandal because it hasn't reached mainstream America deeply enough. But if Hogan's credibility begins to be a serious question nationwide, there isn't an advertiser in the country who wouldn't hesitate to back away from them and that's the success of their syndicated network."

Recently, in a move unrelated to the Graham/Shults charges, the USA Network eliminated its second weekly run of *PRIME TIME WRESTLING* on Wednesday nights.

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IDIOTS

Jan. 20-25

(WCW/TBS) - [CLASH OF THE CHAMPIONS]: Steiners d. Curtis Hughes/Big Van Vader (9:00); Brian Pillman/Marcus A. Bagwell d. Tracy Smothers/Terry Taylor (7:20); Johnny B. Badd d. Richard Morton (3:22); (SEG) Pillman decks J.B. Badd in interview after J.B. plants fake kiss on Brian; P.N. News d. Diamond Dallas Page (3:26); (SEG) Jesse Ventura introduced & Sting signs contract to wrestle Lex Luger at SUPERBRAWL II; (FEATURE) History of Steiner Bros.; (FALLS COUNT ANYWHERE) Cactus Jack d. Van Hammer (10:09) in cattle barn when Abdullah the Butcher accidentally hits Hammer w. shovel. Abby then dunks Cactus & Missy Hyatt in watering trough; Freebirds d. Brad Armstrong/Big Josh; Vinnie (Oz) Vegas d. Thomas Rich (1:01); (6-MAN) Barry Windham/Ron Simmons/Dustin Rhodes d. Arn Anderson/Bobby Eaton/Larry Zbyszko (9:28); Sting/Ricky Steamboat d. Rick Rude/Steve Austin (11:22) but Rude gives Steamboat two Rude Awakenings after & whips him w. belt. **POWERSLAM.**
[POWER HOUR]: Pillman d. Sgt. Buddy Lee Parker; (OMNI/WCW LT. HWT. TITLE) Jushin Liger d. Pillman to win belt; Steiners d. Dave Diamond/Bob Cook; Badd d. Chris Sullivan; (CLASSIC/WRESTLE WAR '89/WCW TV TITLE) Sting d. Iron Sheik to retain belt; (MISSY DOES MAIL) Cactus-Abdullah saga; (WCW TV TITLE) Simmons d. Austin by DQ when Eaton comes off top on Ron. Steamboat saves & entire Alliance and Dudes with New Attitudes get into 8-way brawl. Austin retains belt. **RESTHOLD-PLUS.**

[WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP]: Freebirds d. Greg Sawyer/Rich; Rude d. Kyle; (WCW MAGAZINE) Eric Bischoff w. Sting signing to meet Luger, Cactus-Abby feud; (6-MAN) Hughes/Vegas/Cactus d. Simmons/Abdullah/Big Josh; (FEATURE) Clips of Sting & Luger each defeating Sid Vicious; Bagwell d. Rip Rogers; Hammer d. Smothers; Rhodes d. Anderson by DQ when Zbyszko runs in but Windham chases him. Austin tries ambush but Windham grabs Steve's foot while Dustin holds off Dangerous Alliance w. chair. Barry snatches Paul E.'s phone & creams Austin's knee w. it before locking in figure-4; Badd d. Rick Thames; (CLASH) Rude whipping Steamboat; (SEG) Steamboat demands Rude to come out but Rick doesn't show; (HANDICAP) Vader d. Kevin Grant/Carl Robertson; (LT. HWT. CONTENDERS MATCH) Morton d. Pillman when Badd blows confetti in Brian's face. Pillman creams Morton and J.B. Armstrong comes to help; Steiners d. Eaton/Zbyszko by DQ when Bobby applies Alabama jam as Scott is pinning Larry. Alliance gives double brainbuster to Rick after. **DRAW-PLUS.**

(WCW/SYN) - [WORLD WIDE]: Steamboat d. Zbyszko but Alliance jumps Steamboat & Rude prepares to whip him until Sting & New Dudes with Attitudes save; Eaton d. Bagwell; Simmons/Abdullah d. Hughes/Cactus; (WNN) Gordon Solle w. Luger training video; Rude d. P.N.N.; (U.S. TAG TITLE) Young Pistols d. Pillman/Tom Zenk when Smothers whumps Zenk w. belt. **POWERSLAM.**

[WCW PRO]: Hammer d. Mark Kyle; (6-MAN) Rhodes/Simmons/Steamboat d. Pat Rose/John Peterson/Zan Panzer; (WNN) Same as WWW; Armstrong d. Morton but Richard drives Brad's neck in the mat from top rope after; Steiners d. Hughes/Vader; (ANGLE) Windham says he doesn't have doctor's clearance to wrestle Austin for TV title. Rhodes subs but Paul E. Dangerously declares it non-title. Rhodes d. Austin. **DRAW.**

(LPWA) - [RERUN]: Bad, Black & Beautiful d. Cheryl Day/Alma Alvarez; Madusa Micell d. LaGata; Terri Power d. Comrade Orga; Lady X d. Desree Petersen; (LOUISVILLE SLUGGER) Bambl gets the last word on Jim Cornette; Judy Martin/Lelani Kai d. Misty Blue Simmes/Allison Royal. **NO RATING.**

(USWA/WMC) - [MID-SOUTH COLISEUM/NO DQ] Jeff Jarrett/Jerry Lawler no contest vs. Moondogs when 12-minute brawl gets out of hand. Both refs & Eddie Marlin KO'd. Lawler burns Richard Lee; (MSC/STRAP BATTLE ROYAL) Eric Embry d. Tony Anthony in final but Anthony gets some lashes in on C.J. until Embry ties him in ropes & C.J. returns the whips; Embry d. Bart Sawyer when C.J. trips up & straps him after; (ANGLE) Embry (C.J.), Tony Falk (Jennifer), Tom Prichard (Ms. Texas) and Bull Pain (Samantha) all bring out their girlfriends or valets & say they're the best until Anthony brings out Dirty White Girl Kim, who cleans house w. a whip; Moondogs d. Freezer Thompson/Dasher Hayes and keep bashing them w. chairs after; Jarrett/Lawler d. Ninja/Mephisto. **RESTHOLD-PLUS.**

(WWF/SYN) - [CHALLENGE]: {SPECIAL REPORT} Ric Flair wins ROYAL RUMBLE and WWF title. Roddy Piper wins I-C title; Jake Roberts d. Sean Spencer; Tito Santana d. Barry Horowitz; (SEG) Gene Okerlund intros Hulk Hogan, Undertaker, Randy Savage, Roddy Piper & Sid Justice as top 5 contenders for WWF title; Mountie d. Jimmy James; Beverly Bros. d. Ray Hammer/Terry Davis; Virgil d. Bob Smedley. **RESTHOLD.**

[SUPERSTARS]: Rick Martel d. Mickey Jay; {ROYAL RUMBLE REPORT} Flair/Curt Hennig on Flair's win; Bret Hart d. Jack Owens; (WM8 PREVIEW) Top 5 contenders; Ted DiBiase d. D.D. Russell; (SEG) Chris Chavis in Indian healing ceremony; Justice d. Mike Casey; Owen Hart/Jim Neidhart d. Bob & Brad Avery; Other winner: Repo Man. **RESTHOLD.**

(GLOBAL/SYN) - [MAJOR LEAGUE]: {REPLAY/GWF TV TITLE} Eddie Gilbert d. Terry Garvin 2-3 falls to retain belt by burning Garvin in 3rd fall; Tug Taylor/Chaz d. Tony George/Mike Stetson; Scott Putski d. Sweet Daddy Falcone & Falcone accidentally decks Skandor Akbar; (GWF TODAY) Joe Pedicino w. injury report on Patriot (ink in eye), Garvin (burn), Sting's WCW title shot; (POINT/COUNTERPOINT) Steven De-Truth trashes Scott Hudson as "Insecure;" Gary Young d. Dark Patriot by DQ when Dark caught w. ink squirter. But he throws powder in Young's face & gives Gary two piledrivers on stage; (SEG) Ref James Beard says he'll be in every Gilbert match from now; (GWF TV TITLE/NO DQ) Garvin double countout vs. Gilbert. Eddie retains belt. **POWERSLAM.**

(GLOBAL/ESPN) - [Mon.]: {RETROSPECTIVE} Wild Bunch vs. Coast-to-Coast Connection saga; (REPLAY) Garvin d. Gilbert & the 2 brawl after to pullapart; (\$20,000 6-MAN) Black Bart/Bill Irwin/Rattlesnake Raltz d. Falcone/John Tatum/Rod Price 2-3 falls when Falcone accidentally decks Tatum w. numachucks in 3rd fall. **DRAW.**

[Tue.]: {NORTH AMERICAN TITLE} Patriot d. Scott Anthony 2-3 falls when Anthony piledrives ref in 3rd fall. Dark Patriot runs in, squirts ink in Patriot's eye, "blinding" him. Later, it's said a \$10,000 bounty poster is out on Patriot; (NOTHING BUT DE-TRUTH) Steve Prazak insults Wild Bunch; (EDITORIAL REPLY) Scott Hudson announces POINT/COUNTERPOINT begins next week; {GLOBAL TAG TITLE/BUNKHOUSE} Bill Irwin/Black Bart d. John Tatum/Rod Price 2-3 falls to win belts when Irwin uses horseshoe on Price in 3rd fall. **POWERSLAM-PLUS.**

(WWF/USA) - [PRIME TIME]: {OPEN} Curt Hennig/Bobby Heenan gloat over Ric Flair winning ROYAL RUMBLE & WWF title; Hercules d. Greg Valentine when Herc gets shoulder up on suplex; Hart/Neidhart d. Avery Bros.; Roberts d. Spencer; (FEATURE) Chavis healing ceremony; Big Bossman

SCALE: PINFALL! - Must See. PILEDRIIVER - Excellent. POWERSLAM - Good. DRAW - Average. RESTHOLD - Fair. BOMB - Poor. PLUS - Midscale.

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d. Kato; (CHALLENGE) Sean Michaels throws Marty Jannetty through plate glass window; (I-C TITLE) Bret Hart draw vs. Ted DiBiase but Bret clotheslines Ted out over top after; (RUMBLE) Flair's post-match victory interview; Justice d. Skinner Keirn; Mountie d. James; Chris Walker d. Brooklyn Brawler. DRAW.

(CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING USA) - Mike Miller d. Brickhouse Brown by countout when John Rambo hits Brick w. 2x4; C.W. Bergstrom d. Mike Winner; Grappler d. Buddy Rose w. quick count; Steve Doll d. Rambo by DQ when Rose hits himself in head with numchucks after decking ref. Rambo puts cobra clutch on Doll until faces save; (PACIFIC NW TAG TITLE) Bruise Bros. d. Jesse & Art (Beetlejuice) Barr to win belts. Art juices. DRAW.

(LUCHA LIBRE) - Replay of Jan. 7, 1990 program. NO RATING.

LINES OF THE WEEK

1. Rush Limbaugh, RUSH LIMBAUGH SHOW: "Missy Hyatt looks like someone you could get a disease from but you wouldn't mind it." 2. Jesse Ventura, CLASH, on Rude/Austin: "If I was 20 years older, these two guys could be my sons. They remind me of me." 3. Ventura, CLASH, on Austin's father playing for Rice in Cotton Bowl: "That must have been years ago, 'cause I can't even remember when Rice was in a bowl." 4. Ventura, CLASH, on low blow on Sting: "The next time he does ROXANNE, it's gonna be at soprano level." 5. Jim Cornette, LPWA, on Laughlin crowd: "It's a genetic melting pot, about like Charles Darwin's waiting room." 6. Bobby Heenan/Curt Hennig, PTW, on Flair winning WWF belt: "We're not the kind of guys to say we told you so...but WE TOLD YOU SO!" 7. Craig Johnson/Eddie Gilbert, ESPN: (EG) "I don't think anybody should get hit by cars or burned. People who do that ought to be thrown out of wrestling." (CJ) "I would hope no one would get hit by a car or burned. What else can we talk about from your past history?" 8. Ross, CLASH, on Vinnie Vegas: "He looks like a maitre d' from the Riviera." 9. Joe Pedicino, LPWA: "The Queen's Court reminds me of track and field." 10. Paul E. Dangerously, PRO: "If there had been a back door at the Alamo, Texas would have been in Mexico, Barry Windham. Just like you...running away." 11. Ross, PRO, on Steiners' mascot: "I wonder if they have a muzzle for that dog. If they do, we might want to adapt it for Paul E. Dangerously, who we still have to endure in this hour." 12. Hulk Hogan, WC, on Jack Tunney: "You may be near-sighted but you're not blind." 13. Vince McMahon/Hennig, SOW: (V) "Have you ever worn pink, Mr. Perfect?" (CH) "Have you?" (V) "I asked you first. Sounds appropriate: Mr. Perfect in Pink." 14. Johnson/Bruce Prichard, MLW: (CJ) "Technical knowledge that I don't have. That's why I have you around." (BP) "I didn't know why they had me around. I thought it was to tie your tie this week." 15. Tom Prichard, WMC, on C.J./Jennifer: "You two are real pretty. You're pretty ugly to me." 16. Ashley Kennedy, LPWA, on Reggie Bennett: "I hear you made this month's cover of Chubby Chaser magazine." 17. Boni Blackstone, LPWA, on Comrade Orga: "She's no little pencil-hair." 18. Cornette, LPWA, on Bambl: "She's about to keel over from terminal cuteness." 19. Cornette, LPWA, on crowd: "If you take the front row and count their teeth, you'd have their collective IQ." 20. Roddy Piper, WC, on Flair: "I know how his nose grows when he lies." 21. Ross, CLASH, on Brian Pillman: "WCW's version of Charlie Hustle." 22. Gorilla Monsoon/Heenan, WC, on

Heenan's poem: (GM) "Jameson could get something better than that." (BH) "Probably typhoid." Monsoon/Heenan, WC, on Jameson's snack: (GM) "Looks like a cheeseburger." (BH) "Probably something he got off the floor." 23. Heenan, WC: "Roses are red. Violets are blue. The brain is so smart...don't you wish you were, too?" 24. Steven DeTruth, MLW: "Craig Johnson, who has all the wrestling announcing integrity of a small soapdish." 25. McMahon/Hennig, on D.D. Russell: (V) "What do you think D.D. stands for?" (CH) "I'd hate to comment after looking at the guy." (V) "Ever seen any trunks like that?" (CH) "I've never seen a body like that." 26. Gilbert, ESPN: "After last week's loss, I went to a winner. I went to Barry Horowitz and said, 'What do I do, now?'" 27. Gilbert, ESPN, on ref: "He's like Cousin Itt of the Gilbert Wrestling Federation." 28. Ross/Cactus Jack, JIM ROSS SHOW: (JR) "I sometimes get my wires crossed. Does that ever happen to you?" (CJ) "On the phone...or in life?" 29. Al Madril, CWUSA, on Beetlejuice blading: "Looks like he's losing a little Beetlejuice." 30. Madril, CWUSA: "After Mike Winner wrestles me, he'll have to change his name to Mike Loser." 31. Madril/Don Coss, CWUSA, on Buddy Rose: (AM) "What are you at now, Buddy? 217? 216? (DC) "Now, what about the other side?"

STRONGEST COMMENTS - 1. Ventura, CLASH: "WCW is the wrestling of the future." 2. Undertaker, WC, on Jack Tunney: "Make me the number one contender or I'll eliminate all the other contenders, then I'll come after you." 3. DeTruth, MLW: "I think we can sum up Scott Hudson with three words: jealous, insecure, quitter." 4. Heenan, PTW, on prospect of Flair meeting Piper: "That's okay. Flair's used to knocking around things in a skirt."

QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK - 1. Bambl, LPWA, to Cornette: "How do you keep a fool in suspense? I'll get back to you next week." 2. Ross, PRO, on Steiners' dog: "Where's Marlin Perkins when you need him?" 3. Cornette, LPWA, on Desiree Petersen: "Is she where the expression came from, something's rotten in Denmark?" 4. Tony Schiavone, WWW, on Abby/Simmons: "How do you talk to someone who's never spoken?"

TAKE THAT, OLE, AWARD - Cactus Jack, JRS: "A little more than a year ago, some people in WCW wrote me off as just an idiot who took chances."

NICKNAMES OF THE WEEK - 1. THE CINCINNATI KID (Ross on Pillman). 2. PUTRID PLUMBER (Paul E. on Dusty Rhodes). 3. THE RUSSIAN TANK (Pedicino on Comrade Orga). 4. SILICONE SIDESHOW (Kennedy on Reggie Bennett). 5. SLIM JIM (Piper on Tunney). 6. MALNOURISHED CHICKEN (Samantha on Ms. Texas). 7. PEROXIDED PRINCESS (Kim Anthony on C.J.). 8. GREASEBALL (DeTruth on Johnson). 9. MIDWESTERN MICRO MINI-MEN (Rick Rude on KC fans). 10. BIG OL' UNCLE FESTER (Missy on Abby). 11. HORSEFACE (Missy on Madusa). 12. METHUSELAH (Johnson on Gilbert).

BEST PICTURES - 1. CLASH, Abdullah dunking Missy in water trough. 2. CLASH, Cactus Jack-Van Hammer brawl. 3. CLASH, Paul E. calling "timeout." 4. CLASH, Pillman/Bagwell double slingshot cross bodyblocks. 5. CLASH, Scott Steiner waistlock suplex on Curtis Hughes. 6. MLW, Terry Garvin biting Eddie Gilbert. 7. CLASH, Sting/Steamboat vs. Rude/Austin post-match. 8. WCW, Windham figure-4 on Austin. 9. LPWA, Over-top bump by Madusa. 10. WMC, Lawler/Jarrett vs. Moondogs brawl.

HYPE AWARD - Tony Schiavone, CLASH: "We think this is going to be the best CLASH OF THE CHAMPIONS ever."

(Continued on Page 8)

MATWATCH

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MATWATCHING

A LONG RELATIONSHIP?: The Fox special next weekend is the only one Titan is contracted for but Steve Planamenta says "we hope it's a long relationship."

AL BUNDY AT RINGSIDE?: Apparently, the producers of *MARRIED: WITH CHILDREN* are WWF fans and Titan is hopeful of working a long-range deal for Ed O'Neill as Al Bundy to appear on a future special.

HULK SIMPSON?: If the Fox-Titan bond seals, another talked of tie-in is for a Hulk Hogan cartoon character to appear on *THE SIMPSONS*.

BASIL IN DEMAND: Neither Titan nor WCW will acknowledge this but sources close to both promotions have told MATWATCH WCW sounded out WWF executive Basil DeVito about taking the reins of the Turner group before Kip Frey was promoted. According to the insiders, DeVito never actually negotiated with WCW but insist he was told in December if he wanted Jim Herd's post, the job was his.

WWF IN MEMPHIS: The return to the Great American Pyramid is March 14 with the Hogan/Piper vs. Flair/Undertaker tag match on top as will go around the horn.

CHICAGO FIZZLE: Rosemont Horizon drew its worst house in years Saturday night as 7,500 showed for a Flair-Piper main event. Piper won on a DQ when, as he had Flair in the sleeper, he was coldcocked by Undertaker's urn. Undertaker had earlier lost to Sid Justice on a similar DQ with the urn. Crowd said to not be happy with what one insider termed a "double Dusty finish."

BRIAN'S NO. 1: So you're confused? So you thought Brian Pillman was going heel on the *CLASH*? Then, the next night in Kansas City, Johnny B. Badd pops Brian with the confetti to cause him to lose a "number one contender's" match for the light heavyweight title to Richard Morton. Yep, Brian will be declared the top contender to Jushin Liger on this weekend's TV anyway. You figure it.

LIGER'S WEEK: Liger will work Feb. 24-29 for WCW and will face Morton until his rematch with Pillman at *SUPERBRAWL II*.

FREEBIRD FUROR: Michael Hayes and Jimmy Garvin were said to be furious about the foulup on the audio of their "I'm a Freebird" tune last week. How could it happen? The wireless headsets they were wearing to feed the program audio apparently malfunctioned for the first two-thirds of the number.

AT NATPE: Jack Petrik, Frey, El Gigante, Madusa Miceli and Bill Kazmaier all appeared at the Turner booth for WCW. Kazmaier, billed as the "world's strongest man," drew the surprising most attention from New Orleans TV stations and the closed-circuit NATPE NEWS segments.

TITAN'S TIME: Vince McMahon and Hulk Hogan appeared for one day at midweek at NATPE. But only two matches were held on the convention floor this year.

FEW NEW DEALS: Planamenta told us Titan wasn't working on signing a lot of new stations for the WWF shows at the convention. The company was making a big push, instead, for its new *BODYSTARS*.

GLOBAL GOINGS: Eddie Gilbert joined Joe Pedicino and Boni Blackstone in the Andrews Entertainment booth and Global gained a clearance in Toledo during NATPE.

HUNKERING HERB: Herb Abrams was again walking the convention floor with Steve Williams and was said to be furious at Mario Savoldi for announcing his IWCCW would replace the UWF on SportsChannel America. But SCA officials confirmed they're doing no more business with Abrams.

IWF GAINS: Eddie Mansfield's group is gaining a slot on the Channel America network, which serves 102 low-power and small-market independent stations. He's also cemented a deal for WFCT in Fayetteville/Raleigh, N.C.

FRIDAY IN DALLAS: Black Bart "hung" Bill Irwin over the ropes and the Coast-to-Coast Connection worked Bill over. It allows Irwin, Tug Taylor, John Tatum and Rod Price to make a 10-day tour of Saudi Arabia.

BACK ON EDDIE: Eddie Gilbert regained the held-up Global TV title by defeating Terry Garvin. This Friday, the two have a match where the first to throw a punch loses.

FAMILY FEUD: Chaz and Tug Taylor went to a no contest with the Davis Brothers. And Brute Force won a couple of squashes.

PATRIOTIC PIN: The Dark Patriot (Doug Gilbert) is skedded to beat The Patriot (Del Wilkes) for the Global North American belt Friday. He'll keep it 4-6 weeks in a storyline which will see Eddie join forces with The Patriot and even get a shot at his own brother's belt. But Eddie eventually turns on Del some time in March. Eddie gets the title shot in a one-night tourney Feb. 7.

A SAD SPLIT: Baby Doll (Nicola Roberts Smith) did not appear Friday night. She phoned ahead to GWF people that she and Sam Houston apparently are not able to work out differences and are filing for divorce. Candi Divine subbed in Sam's corner last Friday against Bull Pain. His sister (Rockin') Robin Smith will take Nicola's place next week.

SATURDAY IN MEMPHIS: Jerry Lawler and Jeff Jarrett defeated the Moondogs at the Mid-South Coliseum in a "no-stopping-the-match" bout. Jarrett Promotions is hopeful of moving to regular Saturdays come April.

GOODBYE, EVANSVILLE: Jarrett has closed his Evansville cards after many years. It was costing him \$300 a week just to air the TV tapes locally and he was only drawing an average of \$1,200 from his gates. With building rent and transportation costs, it was a deficit.

MEMPHIS RETURNS: Doug Gilbert starts back (as himself) for USWA this Saturday on TV and will work both it and Global. Bull Pain and Samantha also made it in last Saturday after their Friday night in Dallas.

OWEN'S GOIN'S: Don Owen's new *CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING U.S.A.* series has much weaker production values than his old Portland show. Taped in Washington, the lighting is much poorer and it doesn't have the same ambience as the former program.

JUICING JUICER: In case you wondered, Art Barr was allowed to blade in last week's tag battle where he and brother Jesse faced Ron and Don Harris because the bout was in Washington, not Oregon where blading is banned.

CLASH Takes Week Despite Low Mark

Despite its comparatively weak rating, **CLASH OF THE CHAMPIONS** on TBS captured the Nielsen cable ratings race for the week ending Jan. 21.

CLASH scored a 3.7 rating and 5.5 per cent share of audience to overcome **WWF PRIME TIME WRESTLING** by half a rating point. The special gave a WCW the top rating spot for the 16th time in 20 weeks.

PRIME TIME, reviewing the Ric Flair victory at the **ROYAL RUMBLE**, drew a 3.2/4.6 to finish as the top weekly series.

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING and **WCW MAIN EVENT** both turned in strong performances, each drawing 2.9 ratings with the Saturday show getting the edge in share, 5.7 to 5.4.

ALL-AMERICAN WRESTLING surged over its previous week, increasing 14% to a 2.5/6.1. **WCW POWER HOUR** stayed level with a 1.8, again topping a million homes.

CABLE

Week Ending Jan. 21	Rating/Share	Total Homes	Year Ago
WCW Clash (TBS 1/21)	3.7/5.5	2.12 million	3.9/5.8
WWF Prime Time (USA 1/20)	3.2/4.6	1.85 million	3.0/4.3
WCW World Champ. (TBS 1/18)	2.9/5.7	1.66 million	2.2/3.3
WCW Main Event (TBS 1/19)	2.9/5.4	1.65 million	2.2/3.3
WWF All-American (USA 1/19)	2.5/6.1	1.44 million	2.3/4.6
WCW Power Hour (TBS 1/18)	1.8/6.8	1.03 million	1.4/3.9

VIDIOTS

(From Page 6)

DREADED GLITCH

AWARDS - 1. TBS, for short-circuit in mlkes on **CLASH**. **2.** Freebirds, **CLASH**, for not being

able to lip-sync to "I'm a Freebird" during first half of number.

ALL-CLICHE TEAM - 1. Hyatt, **CLASH**: "...where the action is." **2.** Ventura, **CLASH**: "...all's fair in love and war." **3.** Ric Flair, **SOW**: "...to be The Man, you gotta beat The Man." **4.** Flair, **SOW**: "...whether you like it or don't like it, learn to love it because it's the best thing going." **5.** Gilbert, **ESPN**: "...close but no cigar." **7.** Rev. Slick, **PTW**: "...credit where credit's due."

ENGLISH LESSON - 1. Hogan, **WC**: "Look how Ric Flair has RAN from me since he's been in the WWF."

BLOOPER AWARDS - 1. Every WCW announcer who referred to **THE CLASH OF CHAMPIONS**. **2.** Heenan, **WC**, for asking if WWF champion Eddie Robinson was head coach at Grambling. **3.** Flair, **SOW**: "We did it in record-setting fashion. We wrestled 54 minutes." Ric, you lasted 60:02. **4.** Heenan, **PTW**, for calling Rev. Slick's choir the **MUTED** Voices, rather than the Anointed Voices. **5.** Heenan, **PTW**, on Super Bowl service: "I'm going to bring along a film crew. I wanted to save this for my posterior."

BOO AWARD - WORLD WIDE, for Windham "not having clearance by doctor" to wrestle after being in **CLASH** bout Tuesday night. That's the flaw of taping too far in advance.

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This is it. Our last chance to sell you on what we hope will be entertaining and informative reading for your late winter. **MATWATCH: THE FINAL CHAPTER** will be published the last week in February and is your chance to relive high moments of 1991 on the TV mat and journey back with us through four unpredictable years of **MATWATCH**.

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